

NEW GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

FURTHER DISCUSSION.

CHIEF SECRETARY HAS TO WITHDRAW.

The motion submitted by Mr. Bice—"That, before any definite action is taken by the Government on the matter of a new residence for the Governor, Parliament should be given an opportunity of discussing the question"—was further debated in the Legislative Council on Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. Warren failed to see what possible advantage could accrue from shifting the present site of Government House. The position now occupied was ideal. A new Government House might certainly be erected, but he hoped it would be on the present site. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Bice said he was only taking the opportunity of replying because the warmth that had been introduced into the debate by the Minister of Agriculture demanded an explanation. The Government must have agreed a long time ago to move the Governor's residence from its present position, for £20,000 had been included on the Estimates. The Minister of Agriculture had accused him of bringing forward the motion for political purposes. He denied that absolutely. There was no warrant for the suggestion. He hoped the Government would fall in with his proposal, and deal with the matter in a Bill that Parliament could discuss. The cry that more room was needed for the University grounds was not a reasonable excuse in this case, for the old Snow Grounds were now available for that purpose. He wished to refer to the papers laid on the table the previous day with respect to the purchase by the Government of Dr. Hynes' Sanatorium. The matter had been brought up in the debate previously. He would not say, as Mr. Lucas had said, that the Government had used the taxpayers' money to defeat the aims of the Liberal Union.

Mr. Lucas—I said the Government's action lent itself to that suspicion.

Mr. Bice—If that was what Mr. Lucas had said he would say the same. He was prepared to say deliberately, and having in mind the consequences with which the Chief Secretary threatened them, that it did lend itself to that suspicion. People who read the papers in connection with the matter could only come to the conclusion that the circumstances lent themselves to the suspicion that the Government had stepped in over the heads of the Liberal Union and deprived them of a fine property.

Mr. Howe—That has not been denied.

Mr. Bice—The Chief Secretary said there was not an atom of truth in what Mr. Lucas said.

The Chief Secretary—And I say it again.

Mr. Lucas—Mr. President, I ask that the Chief Secretary should withdraw that.

The President—I did not hear it. What was it?

Mr. Lucas—He imputed untruth to me.

The President—Will the Chief Secretary withdraw it?

The Chief Secretary—Withdraw what?

The President—What Mr. Lucas says you said.

The Chief Secretary—I should like to know what I have to withdraw.

Mr. Lucas—The Chief Secretary said there was not an atom of truth in some thing I said.

The Chief Secretary—I did not know it was breaking the standing orders to say "There is not an atom of truth in it."

The President—The hon. member called attention to words to which he objects, and I ask you to withdraw them.

The Chief Secretary—Am I to accept an imputation of untruthfulness against myself?

The President—That is not the point. There are certain Parliamentary forms of expression, and to impute untruthfulness to an hon. member is not within the standing orders. I feel sure the Chief Secretary will withdraw.

The Chief Secretary—To comply with the standing orders I will do what you wish.

The President—I have allowed an irregular intrusion to be made in this debate. The purchase of Dr. Hynes' house has nothing to do with the removal of Government House, and I ask the hon. member not to deal with it in his speech.

Mr. Bice thought the matter was of such importance that when papers were asked for to be laid upon the table of the House, or questions were asked, the fullest information should be given. There should be no suppression of facts, and answers given should not be evasive. He would take another opportunity of bringing the matter before the Council, and would embrace in the discussion a criticism of the land speculations and dealings of the Government. More light should be thrown upon them. With regard to the motion, he was sorry the Government had treated it with so little courtesy, and he hoped they would not continue in their proposal to prevent the Legislative Council from having that opportunity they were entitled to of discussing a matter of such public importance. (Hear, hear.)
The motion was carried.

Register, Oct. 5th, 1911

ANTARCTIC MONOPLANE.

Early Morning Flight.

Lieut. Watkins's Narrow Escape.

Blinded by Petrol Fumes.

The initial flight in South Australia of Dr. Mawson's monoplane, which will go to the antarctic, occurred at Cheltenham Park Racecourse in the early hours of Wednesday morning. The ascent was made by Lieut. Watkins, in the presence of about a dozen fortunate spectators, but the number of sightseers was considerably increased during the progress of the flight. While it was eminently successful, it ended in a misfortune which Lieut. Watkins subsequently described as the "narrowest escape" he has experienced as an aviator. Some time after the machine had been in the air, Lieut. Watkins found that the pressure of petrol in the lower tank was so great that the liquid was forced out of the top tank straight into his face. The fumes at once became so overpowering that he was forced to make a hurried descent. All he could see of the earth was a blur of green grass, and in alighting the five-foot long post on the course was not observed, with the result that the machine struck the post with the outer end of one of the plane wings. The post was snapped off like a carrot, and the wing was slightly damaged. Lieut. Watkins was quite dazed when he reached terra firma, and a few minutes longer in the aeroplane would in all probability have rendered him unconscious. As it was he quickly recovered, and within a short space of time had regained his normal condition. The damage to the wing plane was not serious, and repairs were effected during the morning.

—A Great Flight.—

On Tuesday afternoon the monoplane had been prepared for flight, and Lieut. Watkins, the engineer (Mr. F. H. Bickerton), and Mr. F. Wild spent the night under canvas in readiness for a trial in the morning. Daylight dawned with perfect conditions. A light easterly breeze with a cloud-flecked sky and keen, crisp atmosphere, were just the elements required for a test. The machine was hauled from underneath its canvas home shortly before 6 o'clock, and within a few minutes Lieut. Watkins was mounted in his place at the head of the monoplane. The engine was started, and with a mighty rush forward the huge birdlike mechanism ran along the ground in a southerly direction. Lieut. Watkins kept her on the sward to thoroughly test her under carriage, then turned her round at the southern end of the course, and with a run of about 50 ft. she rose with consummate ease and grace to a height of 20 ft., and then landed again without the slightest jolt. Satisfied that all the controls were perfect, Lieut. Watkins then took his machine straight up into the air after a short run at the rate of about 45 miles an hour. He circled her round the course. With each circuit the aeroplane rose higher and higher into the air, until an elevation of about 500 ft. was attained.

The operator tested her in every conceivable way, and found she answered every call. She rose and fell, and turned pretty sharp curves, and planned downwards, or soared upwards with all the grace of a bird. With ever-widening circles the machine passed over the Woodville Railway Station, over the top of the late Mr. D. Bower's house, across a grove of gumtrees, along Torrens road, into Finsbury Park, and then turning westward, came over the top of the Derby Stand. The whirr of the engine and propeller was heard a mile away, and brought out the occupants of the houses in the district in all sorts of night attire to witness the extraordinary spectacle. For fully 20 minutes the machine was in flight, and it was only interrupted by the mischance which compelled Lieut. Watkins to hurry to earth. Travellers by the early trains heard the unwonted noise disturbing the customary stillness of Cheltenham, and scores of heads were out of the windows, and hundreds of eyes riveted on the machine, as it sped through the air at the rate of nearly a mile a minute. "I flew 18 miles in the 20 minutes," said Lieut. Watkins after his recovery, and she went beautifully. Not a single adjustment was necessary, except the alteration in the pressure tank, and that has been put right. She flew as well as ever she did in England, and I am delighted with her.

"How do you like the ground?"—"Oh, this is one of the finest aviation grounds I have ever seen. It is so open. There are so many spots where one may alight in perfect safety.

The early visitors to the course on Wednesday were entranced with the exhibition. Many, who had been watching the preliminaries of Monday and Tuesday, had in mind the failure of another aeroplane over 12 months ago on the same ground, and were dubious about the ability of the monoplane to fly. They were quite convinced on Wednesday. "I'd give half a sovereign to see another flight like that," remarked one. "Isn't she a beauty? Why, she flies and alights just like a magpie. It's simply marvellous."

Other flights are contemplated, and on Saturday afternoon the public will have an opportunity to see Lieut. Watkins take the air. Although a charge of 2/6 will be made for admission to the course, a large crowd is expected.